



The Mountain-Prairie Review

<http://www.r6.fws.gov/ea/>

March 2002

Welcome to our first issue of the Region 6 newsletter!

Published by our External Affairs office, we intend to produce at least one newsletter a month. Our goal is simple: with each issue we want to give you useful information in a quick, easily read format. Initially we'll try to keep the newsletter to just four pages, so space will be at a premium. We encourage all programs to participate and share information relevant to all regional employees.

On the last page you'll find several columns from the Regional Director's office and our Congressional and Native American Liaisons. While the RD's column will be a regular feature, we'll rotate others using submissions from your programs. Until submission guidelines are finalized, please route submissions through program channels to Dan Sobieck in External Affairs-- 250 word maximum on submissions please. We also welcome your feedback on the newsletter--what works, what doesn't? Let us know.

Steve Williams confirmed as new director:

Steve Williams has been confirmed by the U.S. Senate as the next Director of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Since 1995, Steve has led the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, and prior to that he held leadership positions at the Pennsylvania Game

He brings to the Service a proven record in wildlife management, leadership and an innovative spirit of partnership in addressing resources.

Celebrating a Century of Conservation:

March, 2002, marks the 99th anniversary of the National Wildlife Refuge System, as the Service gears up for the Refuge Centennial celebration next year. The year 2003 marks one of America's great environmental success stories and will help renew our commitment to future generations by investing in the continued protection of our valuable wildlife heritage.

In Region 6, Monte Vista NWR, Rainwater Basin WMD and Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR are designated this year as "focus refuges". These stations will be making a special effort to highlight the Centennial during their public events and outreach activities.



Commission and the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. William is a very strong advocate of partnership efforts and highly respected by his peers in the State wildlife management community, which provides us an excellent opportunity to strengthen our ties with our sister agencies in the States and to lift our cooperative efforts to the next level. He is appreciative of the hard working and talented employees of the Service.

HOT NEWS!

Protecting Raptors:

Raptor electrocution is a particularly hot issue in the Mountain-Prairie Region, where open landscapes make powerlines the most attractive feature on which birds choose to alight. Birds with wing spans that reach between two wires, closing an electrical circuit, are electrocuted.

While encouraging power companies to make equipment "bird friendly", the LE, RW, FR, and MB programs have developed an Avian Protection Strategy to address the problem on Service lands. Prioritizing potential hazards and conducting on-site inspections help us locate problem poles and mitigate trouble spots, serving as a model for other regions and for the utility industry.

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Job Vacancy Announcements

Career Opportunity in North Dakota

If you want to take on the challenge of managing thousands of acres of prairie wetlands and grasslands, gain the sense of pride knowing that you are protecting, enhancing and restoring valuable wildlife habitat for hundreds of wildlife species, and experience the four seasons in American's Duck Factory, this may be the opportunity you have been looking for.

Opening Date: March 11, 2002

Closing Date: March 25, 2002

Position: Refuge Operations Specialist, GS-485-07/09

Promotion Potential: GS-09

Duty Location: Chase Lake NWR, North Dakota

The vacancy can be found under www.usajobs.opm.gov for viewing the main duties and information on how to apply this position.

Approved Leave Share Recipient (s):

- Marisa Henderson, an Office Automation Assistant at the Creston Fish and Wildlife Center, Kalispell, Montana, is an approved leave share recipient.
- Beverly Taylor, an Administrative Support Assistant at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal, Commerce City, Colorado, is an approved leave share recipient.
- Joanne Grady, a Fishery Biologist at the Columbia Fisheries Resource Office, Columbia, Missouri, is an approved leave share recipient.

Stacks O' Facts: learn new facts about three wildcats!

3: Number of species of wild cat found in Montana (mountain lion, lynx, bobcat).

3 1/2-5: width (inches) of typical mountain lion paw print.

3 3/4-4 3/4: width of lynx's paw print.

2 1/4: width of bobcat's paw print.

75-160: weight (pounds) of adult mountain lion.

30-65: weight of lynx.

15-35: weight of bobcat.

15-20: length (in feet) a mountain lion can jump.

8-10: length that a bobcat or lynx can jump.

25: height (in feet) a mountain lion can jump.

8-10: height a lynx can jump.

10-12: height a bobcat can jump.

1: number of deer killed every 10-11 days by a mountain lion.

90+: percent of mountain lion's diet that is made up of deer or elk.

61-85: percent of lynx's winter diet is made up of snowshoe hare (depending on availability).

100: percent of bobcat diet consisting of nearly anything small enough to kill and eat: birds, squirrels, rabbits, porcupines, insects, mice, voles, etc.

22: number of humans killed by mountain lions in the past century (12 in the U.S., 10 in Canada).

238: number of dogbite-related humans deaths in just the U.S. in just two decades (1979-1998).

Equipment Operator:

The incumbent will be involved in prairie grassland and forest restoration projects as well as maintenance of roads, dikes, buildings, firebreaks, water control facilities, public use facilities, and equipment. The diversity of the landscape and work will offer some unique challenges.

Closing Date: April 1, 2002

Position: Engineering Equipment Operator, WG-8, FWS6-02-039 and USAJOBS (Announcement Number DBO-02-F065)

This is a permanent full-time position

Duty Location: J. Clark Salyer NWR and Wetland Management District, North Dakota

If you have any questions or need additional information about this position, please call Gary Erickson at (701) 768-2548

Take a look at the new Fisheries "Signature":

The Fisheries Program is embarking on a new and challenging era that builds on a very proud past.

You may find additional information from our Director on the Lotus Notes portal.





DOI Information Center

Norton Names NWRS Centennial Commission:

2003 marks 100 years of conservation success

Interior Secretary Gale Norton has announced the appointment of a 19-member Centennial Commission who will help map out a plan to ensure that some of this country's greatest natural treasures can be enjoyed by all Americans for the next 100 years.

Commission members include:

- Ramona Seeligson Bass, Board of Director, Forth Worth Zoo
- Michael Bean, Wildlife Program Chairman, Environmental Defenses
- Peter Coors, Vice Chairman and CEO, Coors Brewing Company
- Lynn Greenwalt, former Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Jack Hanna, host of television's "Jack Hanna's Animal Adventures"
- William P. Horn, former Asst. Secretary of Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks
- Karl Malone, 12-time NBA All-Star, Utah Jazz, and Olympic Gold Medalist
- John L. Morris, CEO, Bass Pro Shops
- Kym Murphy, V.P. of Environmental Policy, Walt Disney Company
- Daniel Pedrotti, former President, Boone and Crockett Club

Commission members from Congress are:

- Sen. James Jeffords (I-VT), Chair, Committee on Environment and Public Works
- Sen. Robert C. Smith (R-NH), Ranking Member, Committee on Environment and Public Works
- Rep. James V. Hansen (R-UT), Chairman, Committee on Resources
- Rep. Nick J. Rahall II (D-WV), Ranking Member Committee on Resources
- Sen. Thad Cochran (R-MS), Migratory Bird Conservation Commission
- Sen. John Breaux (D-LA), Migratory Bird Conservation Commission
- Rep. John D. Dingell (D-MI), Migratory Bird conservation Commission
- Rep. Curt Weldon (R-PA), Migratory Bird Conservation Commission



TEN USEFUL WATER FACTS:



1. It is wet.
2. It runs down hill.
3. It is good to drink if it's clean.
4. Fish like it.
5. It weighs 8 lbs per gallon.
6. It boils at 212 degrees F.
7. It freezes at 32 degrees F except in Hawaii where it freezes only if forced by insidious and artificial means.
8. It is good to swim in but if you can't swim, you drown except on the Great Salt Lake where you float.
9. It help tomatos grow in July.
10. It evaporates and leaves without tellin' you if you don't cover it.

FAST FACTS:

With the acquisition of 9,074 acres in St. Mary Parish, Louisiana, Bayou Teche NWR became the nation's 538th National Wildlife Refuge. This is the second refuge established this fiscal year--with Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge being the first.

View from the RD's Office

By Ralph Morgenweck:



I know all Region 6 employees know about the “Canada lynx” incident--when unauthorized hair samples were submitted for testing outside of established study protocols. This incident has spurred Congressional inquiries, an Office of the Inspector General investigation, negative media stories and wide skepticism about our biological integrity.

While the immediate firestorm is far from over, more damaging to us as an agency--and to each of us professionally--is the long-term loss of confidence we have suffered in the eyes of our stakeholders and public. Biological integrity is the cornerstone to everything we do on the ground, in the water, and in the air.

In the past, despite the tremendous external pressures we have often faced, we could and always have relied on this integrity to see us through, to come to the “right” decision biologically. And these decisions, while not always popular, were defensible in the courts of law and public opinion. Sadly, we can no longer rely on this defense.

In the months ahead many of us will be tasked to “prove up” our science whenever there is room for doubt. This we will accomplish--through additional peer view, external review and an open, inclusive approach to our research and implementation. It will take time, but along the way we will regain our credibility. After all, the sound science is there, as it has been all along.

Congressional Affairs

By Matt Kales:

Matt Kales, our new Region 6 Legislative Affairs Specialist, is currently on detail in the Congressional and Legislative Affairs Office in the Washington Office, where he continues to track legislation of interest to Region 6, including:

The 2001 Farm Bill: The Senate version of the Bill, which passed on February 15th, contains Sen. Harry Reid’s (NV-D) Water Conservation Program, though the original scope of the Program is greatly reduced. Strong opposition from Western legislators to transfers of agricultural water allocations to instream uses (during low flow periods to protect imperiled aquatic resources) resulted in compromise language that excluded all but six states, none of which are in Region 6, from participating in the Program. The Service is currently drafting comments on the bill’s implications for OMB.

The President’s FY-2003 Budget Request for the Service: The ’03 request contains a \$56.5 million increase for the National Wildlife Refuge System and a \$10 million increase for the Landowner Incentive Program, and \$9 million and \$28.7 million reductions for Fisheries and Land Acquisition, respectively. Additionally, the ’03 request provides \$60 million for State and Tribal Wildlife Grants, and \$18 million for the new Cooperative Conservation Initiative, a national, competitive challenge grant program designed to foster partnerships between the Service and state and local governments, landowners, and non-government organizations.



Native American Program

By David Redhorse:



The Mountain-Prairie Region includes 34 Indian reservations. Within these reservations are 38 tribal political bodies, including at least 41 tribes. Reservation lands cover about 21 million acres, 13 million acres are tribally owned, and the rest are either Indian allotted lands or private lands.

Tribal Grants:

Some \$49 million in tribal grants are available this year as part of funds appropriated for Landowner Incentive Program and State Wildlife Grants. As this is the inaugural year of these tribal grants, we envision ample opportunities for tribes to participate in developing grant criteria, as well as suggest eligible programs. It is likely our Regional Native American liaisons will serve as program leads, with Fish and Wildlife Management Assistance providing technical assistance and grant monitoring, and Federal Aid managing grant dollars.

The following timetable was set in order that tribes may receive wildlife grants on or before September, 2002:

- Publish Federal Register notice on grants and draft grant guidelines.
- Solicit comments from tribes and interested public.
- Review and address comments from initial Federal Register notice.
- Draft and surname final Federal Register notice.
- Final Federal Register Notice. Request tribes to submit proposal.

Inside Region 6 is a monthly publication produced by the USFWS Region 6 External Affairs Office. Publisher: Ralph Morgenweck, Regional Director; Editor: Dan Sobieck, ARD-EA; Staff Writers: Karen Miranda Gleason, Matt Kales, Diane Katzenberger, David Redhorse, Sharon Rose; Design and Layout: Heather Gonzalez, IRM/ Jean Clemens, EA. All contributions from Region 6 employees are welcomed and will be considered for publication.